

The goal of the Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) project is to move forward with the construction of a statewide voice radio communications system to ensure that emergency responder users can communicate quickly and effectively, each and every time they call for assistance, and to provide a communications system that promotes interoperability between public safety agencies.

Project Approach

Both the 1995 CJIN Governing Board study and the re-validation study in 2002, recognized that a statewide voice radio communications system should be constructed using the 800 MHz frequency spectrum, due in part to the availability of 800 MHz frequencies for public safety, but also because of the widespread use of 800 MHz by most of North Carolina's major metropolitan areas and the commencement of 800 MHz system development by the State Highway Patrol in 1999.

In addition to a statewide 800 MHz voice radio communications system, Crime Control and Public Safety Secretary, Bryan E. Beatty, asked the State Highway Patrol to develop and implement a short term solution to address interoperable communications across North Carolina to assist agencies while development of a long term system was being performed. This short term solution simply serves to connect many of the antiquated and disparate communications systems in use today, but offers no long term replacement for these systems and requires operator intervention to establish connections between agencies. The short term and long term VIPER projects are referred to as the Tactical and Strategic solutions, respectively.

Construction of the VIPER Tactical solution is underway now, funded in its entirety by 2003 Department of Homeland Security funds directed to North Carolina. The construction of the VIPER Strategic solution has been hampered in past years by the lack of significant funding, although